

## Letters of the Sultans of Banten in the National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia

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### ABSTRAK

*Dalam rencana ini, saya akan memperkatakan surat daripada Sultan-Sultan Banten. Saya akan mulai dengan aspek fizikal surat-surat itu dengan diikuti kepengarangannya dan bahasa yang digunakan. Dalam lampiran disertakan fotokopi kedua-dua surat dengan transliterasi teks yang berkenaan.*

*Kata kunci: Pegon Sandangan, Abul Mafakhir Muhamad Aliudin, Sultan Muhamad bin Sultan Muhyiddin Zainuṣṣalihin, Kitab Terasul*

### ABSTRACT

*In this article, I will discuss letters of the Sultans of Banten. I start with their physical aspect, followed by the composition of the letters, the scripts, and the language. The appendix contains a photocopy of both of letters, together with a transliteration of the texts.*

*Key words: Pegon Sandangan, Abul Mafakhir Muhamad Aliudin, Sultan Muhamad bin Sultan Muhyiddin Zainuṣṣalihin, Kitab Terasul*

### INTRODUCTION

Banten was one of the great Islamic kingdoms of 16<sup>th</sup> century Java. It is still an object of interest to scholars, and among works published about it is *The Sultanate of Banten* (Claude Guillot 1990). This article involves an investigation of a number of Banten archives listed in The National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia (ANRI). Two such letters concerning sultans of Banten were found in different archives. They bear the numbers Banten archive No. 18 and No. 61.

No. 18 is a receipt for a payment made by Sultan Banten, Sultan Abul Mafakhir Muhamad Aliudin, to Steve Nicolaas Meijbaum, which was signed on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1781. The other is a letter from Sultan Muhamad bin Sultan Muhamad Muhyiddin Zainuṣṣalihin to the Governor General to the Dutch Indies, Herman Willem Daendels. This is dated November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1810, and is a report of an investigation into the death of a Captain Hij.

## THE SCRIPT

Both letters are in Malay written in *Pegon*.<sup>1</sup> In general, Malay texts use the *Jawi* script, while Javanese texts are written in *Pegon*, *Jawi* being the Arabic recording of the Malay language, while *Pegon* is the Arabic writing of Javanese (Pigeaud 1967: 26).

*Pegon* follows the Javanese writing system, *hanacaraka*. Therefore, the total number of letters in the *Pegon* alphabet is twenty, the same as in the Javanese alphabet (Nitisastro 1933: 4). Of these twenty *Pegon* characters, only 13 are unchanged Arabic characters. These are:  $\text{ا/ه}$  or s (ha)<sup>2</sup>, ن (na), ر (ra), ك (ka), د (da), ت (ta), س (sa), و (wa), ل (la), ج (ja), ي (ya), م (ma) and, ب (ba). The other seven letters are unknown in the Arabic writing system, I call them *aksara Arab rekaan* (adapted Arabic letters) (Pudjiastuti 2000: 101-103).

The seven adapted Arabic letters are  $\text{چ}$  (ca),  $\text{ڦ}$  (pa),  $\text{ڊ}$  (dha),  $\text{ڻ}$  (nya),  $\text{ڳ}$  (ga),  $\text{ڻ}$  (tha) and  $\text{ڻ}$  (nga). Five<sup>3</sup> of these *rekaan* letters, namely  $\text{چ}$  (ca),  $\text{ڦ}$  (pa),  $\text{ڻ}$  (nya),  $\text{ڳ}$  (ga) and  $\text{ڻ}$  (nga) also found in *Jawi*, while the remaining two,  $\text{ڊ}$  (dha) and  $\text{ڻ}$  (tha), are used to represent the Javanese consonants or sounds of “dha” and “tha”. The Javanese language distinguishes between “da” and “dha” and between “ta” and “tha”. Thus, *wedhi* (= sand) and *wedi* (= afraid) or *thuthuk* (= hit) and *tutuk* (= mouth) are different words with different meanings.

The *Pegon* script is written in two ways, namely *Pegon gundhul* (hairless), meaning unvocalized and *sandangan* (dressed), meaning with vowel marks. A text written in *Pegon gundhul* looks similar to *Jawi*, which does not mark vowels. In a text written in *Pegon sandangan*, the vocals are added and sometimes also completed with a *huruf saksi*,<sup>4</sup> such as  $\text{مڱو}$  *mangku* or  $\text{تيك}$  *tiga pulu*.

There are six vocal signs in the *Pegon* script, three of which are borrowed from the Arabic writing system, namely *fathah* for the sound a ( . : . ), *kasrah* for the sound i ( . : . ), and *damma* for the sound u ( . : . ). Two other signs are formed through combining the letter ‘ya’ with *fathah* to achieve the sound é ( . : . ) and combining the letter ‘wau’ with *fathah* for denoting the sound o ( . : . ). The sixth consists of a small wavy line ( ~ ) for the *pepet*.

Both the archived letters of the Sultan of Banten at ANRI are interesting, because they challenge the general understanding of the difference between *Pegon* and *Jawi*. These letters are actually written in *Pegon* script, despite the fact that the language is Malay. Observing this, the question arises: was the normal distinction between *Pegon* and *Jawi* in relation to the language concerned relevant in Banten?

In this article, I will discuss both letters of the Sultans of Banten, and start with the physical aspect, followed by the composition of the letters, the scripts, and the language. The appendix contains a photocopy of both of letters, together with a transliteration of the texts.

## THE LETTERS

## 1. The Letter of Sultan Abul Mafakhir Muhamad Aliudin

This letter, dated November 1<sup>st</sup> 1781, was written in Kota Intan, Banten, by the writer of Paduka Sri Sultan Abul Mafakhir Muhamad Aliudin. In the genealogical list of The Sultans of Banten<sup>5</sup>, Abul Mafakhir Muhamad Aliudin is the 14<sup>th</sup> Sultan of Banten. He was the son of Sultan Muhamad Arif Zainalasyikin and Ratu Sultan Gusti, and was born on July 2<sup>nd</sup> in 1752. When Sultan Muhamad Arif Zainalasyikin died in 1773, Abul Mafakhir ascended the throne bearing the title Paduka Sri Sultan Abul Mafakhir Muhamad Aliudin. He died in 1799.

The letter of Sultan Abul Mafakhir Muhamad Aliudin was found in the third file of the Banten archive No. 18 (Banten 14.3). In the listing of Banten, this archive is recorded on page 2, below the VOC archives. The file of this archive also contains the “*memorie van overgave*” of W. C. Engert to J. Reijnouts. In this report, W. C. Engert mentions the name of Steve Nicolaas Meijbaum as one of the commanders who was assigned with the handling of Banten affairs. However, the statement that links Steve Nicolaas Meijbaum with the contents of this letter does not exist.

The letter measures 40 × 30 cm. This letter still looks excellent. Only the ink in some of the letters has started to break up (Javanese *blabor*) and become blurred. The paper sheet is folded into two; only recto is written. The left side contains a Dutch text in Latin script, with size 21 × 15 cm, and the right side contains the text in *Pegon* characters in Malay, with size 24 × 15 cm. The Dutch text is a translation of the Malay text.

The letter is written on European paper. The sheet contains both a watermark and countermark. The main mark, which is in the left half of the sheet, has the form of a lion with a figure of Hollandia within a ring-fence or palissade with “PRO PATRIA” above it. The countermark on the right side consists of the characters “IKP”. Unfortunately, I could not find any information about this countermark. It probably refers to the initials of the maker or the merchant of the paper. The position of the watermark is 4 cm from the left margin and the countermark is posited 7 cm from the right margin, and the distance between the two marks is 13.5 cm. According to Heawood (1950a: 12 & 22), such a watermark indicates that it was Dutch paper produced between 1600 and 1750. The chain lines run vertically at a distance of 2.4 cm from each other and there are 9 laid lines to the centimeter.

The text is written on the back side of the sheet. The letter is a payment receipt and has a simple composition devoid of heading or seal. However, as a sign of legalization, the signature of the Sultan of Banten appears on the right corner. The letter is divided into three parts: The opening contains the name and address of the sender and the receiver: *alamat syurat ini tandatangan nya*

*paduqa tuwan siri syultan banten mangku yang suda tarima daripada tangan nya tuan kumandur sipi nikulasy mébum.* The content tells us that commander Steve Nicolaas Meijbaum has handed over a total 50916 “real<sup>6</sup> muda” and 41 “tangawang” or 38187 “real tua” and 41 “tangawang” to the Sultan of Banten as payment for the purchase of goods consisting of gold and silver dispatched by the Sultan of Banten to the company authorities in Betawi. The closing statement contains the place and date of this letter: *banten didalam kuta intan satu ari bulan nupember tahun 1781.*

The text is written in *Pegon Sandangan*. The writing is irregular; the size of the letters are not the same; *wau* for example is written in thick and thin ink, and has different sizes. This letter may have a curved leg passing two the letters to its left, whereas the other letters are very small. For the letter *nya* is used the form ب whereas س (*sin*) and ش (*syin*) in initial position is written as a slanting line drawn from the upper right to the lower left. The belly of the letter *sin* and *syin* in final position has the same shape. Two characters are used to represent *s* namely the *sin* and *syin*. For example, in ستو *satu*, there is also sound *sy*, example شورة *syurat*. It is also found that some original Arabic letters have been used in this letter, which are: ش (*syin*) used to write بشر *basyar*, ت (*ta*) used for سلطان *syultan*, and ق (*qaf*) used for فدى *paduqa* and فيرق *piraq*.

The language used is Malay, but observing the diction and language style it seems that influenced by colloquial. The language used is not “standard” Malay or official language of the sultanate, but colloquial Malay in Java. The impression can be clearly observed from the words, among others 5th line: ... *pan bayaran daripada* ... or the 7th line: ... *di tana batawi nyan kumpani suda akan tarima* ... Words such as *pan* and *nyan* are colloquial Malay in Java which in this context means ‘that is’ and ‘which’. It seems that the writer was a speaker Javanese language and an advocate of the Javanese culture. Among the Malay words, he inserted Javanese words such as *mangku* meaning ‘that is’ (similar with *maka* in Malay) and *arta* meaning ‘money’.

#### THE LETTER OF SULTAN MUHAMAD BIN SULTAN MUHYIDDIN ZAINUSSHALIHIN

This letter from Sultan Muhammad bin Sultan Muhyiddin Zainuṣṣalihin was dated November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1810. It was addressed to the Governor General in the Dutch Indies, Herman Willem Daendels. Sultan Muhammad, also known as Sultan Muhammad Syafi’uddin, was the son of Sultan Muhyiddin Zainuṣṣalihin. He was the 20th sultan of Banten, and was inaugurated by Daendels in 1809. When England defeated the Dutch in 1811, Banten became one of the regions occupied by English. In 1813, Stamford Raffles forced Sultan Muhammad Syafi’uddin to abandon his throne. Three years later, in 1816, the Sultan died.

In the Banten archive, this letter is recorded on page 5 as archive No. 61, under the VOC archives, with the title 'Surat Sultan Banten untuk Hooze Regering'. This archive also contains Dutch summaries of the Malay letters. This letter is 38 × 23.5 cm large. It had, however, been folded into two, and measured 19 × 23.5 cm. The text is placed on the three folded letter sheets of different measurements; at 1 r and 1 v the size of the text is 17 × 17 cm with 17 lines on each sheet, whereas at 2 r the size of the text is 11 × 17 cm with 7 lines on a sheet. On the right upper corner (2 v) is written in Dutch, the date of the receipt: *Bantam ! van den koning aan zijn excellentie ontvangen, batavia den 5 van magtm: 1810*. The text is in black ink.

The letter is written on European paper. The watermark is called Horn: a horn hanging within a crowned shield. Papers with the Horn on shield watermark were a type of the English paper produced during the second part of the 18th century (Heawood 1950b: 27). The position of the watermark is in the centre of the sheet 9.5 cm from the upper margin and 8 cm from the bottom margin, and 13.5 cm from the left and right margins. There is no countermark on the paper. The chain lines run vertically at a distance of 2.7 cm from each other and there are 9 laid lines to the centimetre.

This letter has a simple appearance: there are no decorations, no heading, nor a seal as a sign of legalization, although its composition follows the rules of *Kitab Terasul*. This letter which is written and signed by a servant *sahaya* of Sultan Muhamad Muhyiddin Zainuṣṣalihin, is divided into four parts: the compliment, content, gift, and the closing statement. In the opening part is written a compliment and also the name and address of the sender and recipient of the letter: *bahwa ini Ṣahifatu al-mukaromat yang aziz lagi dihiasi dengan beberapa tabe yang mukasyarah padha tiap-tiap ketika dan masa, yaitu dari anaqandha padhuka sri sultan muhamad bin sultan muhamad muhyiddin zainuṣṣalihin dalam negeri banten di bukit pandheglang, lagi menyatakan tandha tulus dan iḥlas lagi di sampaikan allah subḥanahu wa ta'ala juwa kirannya, sampai kepadha ayahandha tuan herman wilem dandles mareskaleq gurnadur jenderal*.

In the content, after the word *wabadahu*, the purpose of the letter is explained: Pangeran Suramenggala has arrived in Pandeglang at the order of *landros*<sup>7</sup> Dekker to investigate the death of Captain Hij, who was stabbed to death by Daeng Kepala Bugis. It is also explained that a number of people, among others Pangeran Musa and Ratu Bagus Sani have been interrogated about this case. It is also conveyed that to prove the statement given by the Sultan, Pangeran Suramenggala had questioned lieutenant Dragonder and received the same information as was reported by the Sultan. Before the closing is written the expectation of the Sultan of Banten to H. W. Daendles. It reads as follows: *yang anaqdha harap siang dhan malam melainkan ayahandha punya kasihan kepadha anaqdha*. And, in the closing statement, we find the place, the name, and the date of the letter: *tersurat di kampung pandeglang hari satu dari bulan selahman*<sup>8</sup> tahun 1810 or Nupember 1<sup>st</sup>, 1810.

The text of this letter is written in *Pegon gundhul*. The characters are neat, small, and skinny. The characteristics of the *Pegon* script can be observed from the use of the letter *dha* (ض) and the mark (˘) which is used for the *pepet*. The example of the form *nya* in this letter is ث and the *ra* (ر) is written in one word with ta marbutah (5), such as: <sup>a</sup>c t• *syurat*. As in the case of the letter from Sultan Abul Mafakhir Muhamad Alialdin, original Arabic letters also occur in this letter, amongst others *ṣad* (ص), *ha* (ه), *syin* (ش) *dan* *ta* (ط), and also the *tasydid* sign as: الله *Allah*, مكرهه *mukatsyarah*, اخلاص *ikhlas*, سلطان *sultan* and صحفت *sahifat*.

This letter is written in “standard” Malay, the choice of words and the style indicating that the writer is someone who is well versed in Malay letters. The words used are sufficiently beautiful and respectful, such as seen in the introduction of the letter: *bahwa ini Ṣahifatu al-mukaromah yang aziz lagi dihiasi dengan beberapa tabe yang mukasyarah padha tiap-tiap ketika dan masa ...* and the closing statement: *... yang anaqdha harap siang dhan malam melainkan ayahandha punya kasihan kepadha anaqdha ...*

In addition, the writer also slips in foreign words, such as terms from Arabic, for example, *Ṣahifatu al-mukaromah*, *aziz*, *mukasyara* (in 1st lines), *warqat al ihlas* (in 7th lines), and from Dutch, such as: *wéynman* (in 9th lines), *soldadu* (in 15th lines), and *selahman* (in 28th lines).

## CONCLUSION

It seems that in Banten, the *Pegon* script is not only used for writing Javanese, but also for Malay. Apparently, the type of script used is determined by the content of the letter or the addressee. Based on the two letters discussed above, it seems that *Pegon gundhul* was used for letters addressed to high-ranking persons. The structure of an official letter such as letter No. 61 follows the rules of the *Kitab Terasul* that prescribes an opening, a main section, and a closing statement, where the language has the characteristics of “standard” Malay spiced with Arabic words. In this particular case, the letter also contains some Dutch words.

*Pegon sandangan* is used for letters to persons having a lower status than the sender, such as letter No. 18. This letter only expresses the purpose. The language is simple and reflects a colloquial style. I assume that the writer was a speaker of Javanese and an advocate of Javanese culture. His writing reflects Javanese pronunciations and he uses some Javanese words.



[illegible]





## APPENDIX

## Transliterations

## THE LETTER OF SULTAN ABUL MAFAKHIR MUHAMAD ALIUDIN

1. alamat syurat ini tandatangan nya paduqa tuwan siri syultan banten |
2. mangku yang suda tarima daripada tangan nya tuan kumandur sipi nikulasy |
3. mébum arta jumla lima pulu ribu syambilan ratusy anam balas riyal muda |
4. dan ampat pulu satu tangwang atawa tiga pulu dalapan ribu syaratus dalapan |
5. pulu tuju riyal tua dan ampat pulu satu tangawang pan bayaran daripada |
6. sagala barang masy-masy san dan péraq nyan tuan syultan suda kirimkan pada |
7. tuan urang basyar di tana batawi nyan kumpani suda akan tarima |
8. tarsabut sagala masy-masys san reyal muda, 13195, dan 1, tangawan atawa riyal pasymat 9896, 17, tangawan |
9. dan sagala piraq, — , 3227,— 25, ———, ———— 2420: 41,— |
10. jumla jadi riyal muda 16422, dan 26 tangawang atawa riyal pasymat, 12316, 58, tangwan |
11. layin lagi daripada itu nyan tar |
12. sabut barang masy-masys san riyal muda, 34494, 15, ———. ——— 25870, 47,— |
13. jumla samwanya riyal muda, 50916, 41, tangawang atawa riyal pasymat, 38187, 41,tangawan |
14. banten didalam kuta intan satu |
15. ari bulan nupember tahun 1781 |
16. abul mafakhir muhamad alialddin |
17. alamat sultan tanda yang suda menerima uwang dari tangan kumendur mébum yang tarsabut |
18. di dalam surat inih |

## THE LETTER OF SULTAN MUHAMAD BIN SULTAN MUHYIDDIN ZAINUSSALIHIN

## I R

1. bahwa ini Sahifatu al-mukaromah yang aziz lagi dihiasi dengan beberapa tabe yang mukasyarah padha tiap-tiap ketika dan masa |
2. yaitu dari anaqandha padhuka sri sultan muhamad bin sultan muhamad muhyiddin zainussalihin dalam negeri |
3. banten di bukit pandheglang lagi menyatakan tandha tulus dan ihlas lagi di sampaikan allah subhanahu wa ta'ala |
4. juwa kirannya, sampai kepadha ayahandha tuan herman wilem dandles mareskaleq gurnadur jenderal, |

5. yang setiawan dan kebesyarannya dari raja walandawi. waba'dahu kemudian dari pada itu |
6. barang maqlum kiranya akan perihal ihwal paduka anaqandha sri sultan muhamad bin sultan muhamad muhyi |
7. ddin zainussalihin manyembahkan warqat al ihlas ini anaqandha sri sultan kasih tahu kepadha |
8. ayahdha tuan mareskaleq gurnadur jenderal dan segala radan pan indiya pangeran suramenggala dhatang |
9. kepadha anaqdha di bukit pandheglang dari tiga puluh satu dari bulan wéynman betul pukul dua belas siang |
10. dhatangnya kepadha anaqdha katanya pangeran sura kepada anaqdha aku dhatang kemari ini perintanya tuan landros |
11. déker dia suruh peperiksa dari dhatangnya ingabehi akarim dan ingabehi abu na'im, dhan dhaheng kepala bugis \

1 v

1. dhan haji nursamsu orang sabang anaqandha kata kepadha pangeran sura dhatangnya ingabehi akarim itu sahaya panggil dan lagi \
2. tannya kepadha anaqdha dari matinya ingbehi akarim dan ingabehi abu na'im anaqdha kata kepadha pangeran sura dari itu \
3. matinya ingabehi akarim dhan ingabehi abu na'im kapitan hé yang tusuk lebih dahulu dan lagi pangeran sura tannya \
4. lagi kepadha anaqdha tannya matinya kapitan hé dan matinya soldadu anaqdha kata kepadha pangeran sura dari itu \
5. kapitan hei matinya kena tusuk sama daheng kepala bugis suda bisa pangeran sura periksa dari itu semuanya \
6. yang bagaimana anaqdha suda kerja anaqdha sudha unjuk dari semuanya pakerjaan, lantas pangeran sura tannya \
7. kepadha letnan dergonder dia tannya dari itu matinya kapitan, letnan dergonder kata kepadha pangeran sura sama |
8. juga yang bagaimana anaqdha suda kata di dalam surat ini dari itu lantas pangeran sura tulis surat kepadha |
9. tuwan deker, temannya pangeran sura periksa kepadha anaqdha di pandheglang ada orang delapan biji satu-satunya namanya itu |
10. orang raden musa, ratu bagus sani, aria astranaya, arya bahuraksa, pangeran kusuma ningrat, aria senapati |
11. ingabehi sura qaralya, ingabehi baya, sabagitu pangeran sura dia punya teman yang suda dhatang kepadha anaqdha di pandheglang, |

2 r

1. dari itu anaqdha kasih beritahu saja kepadha ayahandha tuan gurnadur jenderal, adhapun yabar |

2. yang lain dari akarim dhan abu na'im, seperti zaqarya, dan ahmad, anaqdha belum dhapat habar yang bertul adhanya |
3. tanya anaqdha sudha suruwan dari anaqdha punya orang-orang tuntut dhimana adanya ahmad dhan zaqarya seboleh-boleh anaqdha |
4. cari juga dari ayahandha punya senang dhan ayahandha punya baik adhanya, yang anaqdha harap siang dhan malam melainkan |
5. ayahandha punya kasihan kepadha anaqdha. tamat al-kalam bil-hoir, tersurat di kampung pandhe |
6. glang hari satu dari bulan selayman tahun 1810 |
7. “ ”
8. bahwa ini tandha tangan sahaya sultan muhammad bin sultan muhammad muhyiddin zainussalihin ,, |

#### NOTES

1. According to Kromopawiro (1867: 10), Pegon originated from the Javanese *pego*, meaning *ora lumrah anggone ngucapake* 'unusually pronounced', since the Javanese written in Arabic resulted often in wrong pronunciations. For example, *madya* is written مديا (read: madeya = medium).
2. In *Pegon* script, alif and ha are considered as variances and not as two different letters, since no difference in meaning is involved. At the initial of a word ha will be written with alif, example: *hapa* هفا is written *apa* افا (Nitisastro, 1933: 4).
3. According to Mukhamaad Buhkari Lubiş (1993: 107) three of the five Arabic letters in Jawi, namely ج (c), ف (p), and غ (g) were taken from Persian, while the letters ث (ny) and غ (ng) were new inventions for Jawi. I think this opinion is less accurate because in the Persian alphabet the letter forming % does not exist. The pronunciation 'pe' does exist, but its form is ب (see Begley, 1985: 11). So, I think the letter ف (p) is also an invented Jawi letter and not taken from Persian.
4. Huruf saksi are vowels: Alif corresponds to a, wau corresponds to u and o, and ya corresponds to i and e (Lewis 1958: 19).
5. The genealogy of the Sultans of Banten is from Ismail Muhammad, see in *Catatan Masa Lalu Banten*, Halwany Michrob and Mujahid Chudori. Serang: Saudara, 1993: 324-329.
6. In the article of Halwany Mihkrob, *Catatan Sejarah dan Arkeologi: Ekspor-Import Di Zaman Kesultanan Banten*. Serang: Kadinda (1993: 31-33) there was information regarding to the prevailing currency during the Banten Sultanate era since 16<sup>th</sup> century. This book also mentioned that 1 real = 35 peku, and 1 peku = 1000 picis, but there is no clarification regarding the meaning of real muda, real tua, or tangawang.
7. Residence, see Halwany Michrob and Mudjahid Chudori, in *Catatan Masalah Banten*. Serang: Saudara (1993: 175).
8. Dutch 'Slachtm aand' refers to November.

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